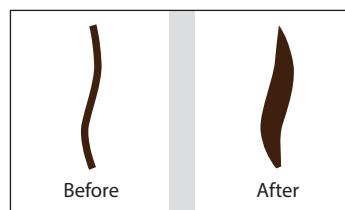**Ai** Adobe Illustrator **2023** release

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Classroom in a Book®
The official training workbook from Adobe
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Using the Width tool

Not only can you adjust the weight of a stroke, as you did in Lesson 3, but you can alter regular stroke widths either by using the Width tool (✍) or by applying width profiles to the stroke. This allows you to create a variable width along the stroke of a path. Next, you will use the Width tool to adjust the path you just reshaped, to finalize the tail.


Before   After

1 Select the Width tool (✍) in the toolbar.

2 Move the pointer over the middle of the path you just reshaped, and notice that the pointer has a plus symbol next to it (▶+) when it's positioned over the path. If you were to drag, you would edit the width of the stroke. Drag away from the line, to the right. Notice that, as you drag, you are stretching the stroke to the left and right equally. Release the mouse button when the measurement label shows a Width of approximately 44 pixels.
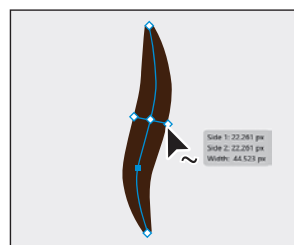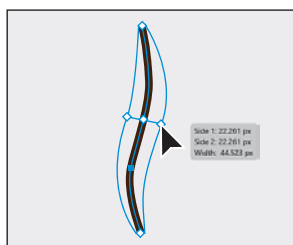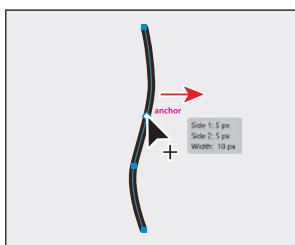

You just created a variable stroke on a path, not a shape with a fill. The new point on the original path is called the *width point*. The lines extending from the width point are the *handles*.

3 Click in an empty area of the artboard to deselect the point.

4 Move the pointer anywhere over the path. You should see the width point you just created (an arrow is pointing to it).

5 Move the pointer over the original width point, and when you see lines extending from it and the pointer changes (▶~), drag it up and down to see the effect on the path. See the last part of the following figure for where it should approximately land.
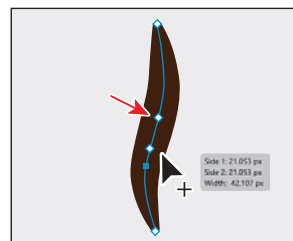
In addition to dragging to reposition a width point, you can double-click and enter values in a dialog box. That's what you'll do next.
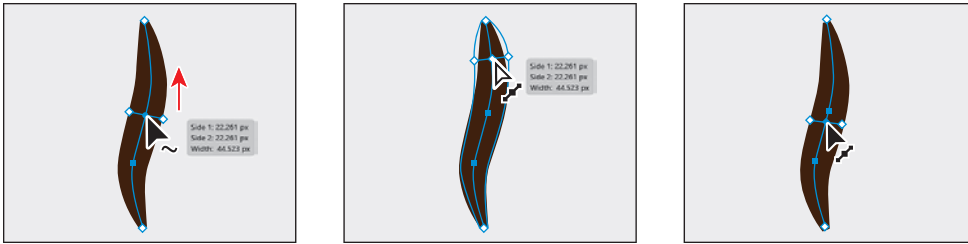
6 Move the pointer over the top anchor point of the path.

Notice that the pointer has a wavy line next to it (▶) and the word "anchor" appears (see the first part of the following figure).

7 Double-click the point to create a new width point and to open the Width Point Edit dialog box.

8 In the Width Point Edit dialog box, change Total Width to **0 in**, and click OK.
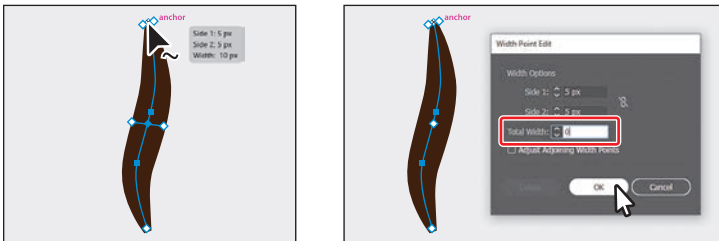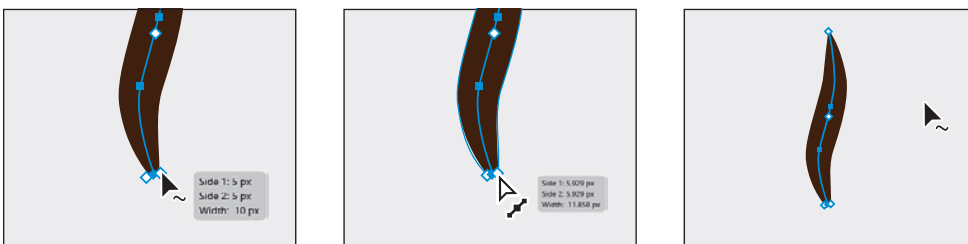
The Width Point Edit dialog box allows you to adjust the length of the width point handles, together or separately, with more precision. Also, if you select the Adjust Adjoining Width Points option, any changes you make to the selected width point affect neighboring width points as well.

9 Move the pointer over the handle on either side of the bottom anchor point of the path. Drag so that the width is roughly 12 pixels.

You could also have double-clicked the anchor point at the bottom to set the total width to 12 pixels in the Width Point Edit dialog box, like you did in the previous step.

Using Intertwine

A time-saving feature in Illustrator is Intertwine. With Intertwine, you can take a path like you see in the figure and make part of it appear on top of another object or behind that same object. This can give the appearance of the path "intertwining" around the other object.

Before   After
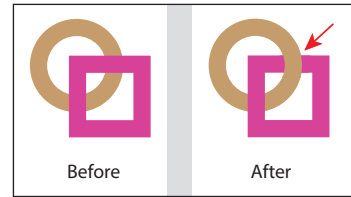
In this section, you will intertwine a scarf on the dog so it looks like it goes behind and in front of the body of the dog.

1   Choose 2 Signage from the Artboard Navigation menu in the lower-left corner of the Document window.

2   With the Selection tool selected, click the white serpentine shape (the scarf) on the dog's body.

3   Choose View > Zoom In several times to see it better.

The white scarf would look good if it appeared to wrap around the dog—going behind and in front of the body of the dog. You can do that manually using the Scissors tool to cut the white scarf path and send paths behind, but using Intertwine is much easier.

4   Shift-click the body of the dog to add it to the selection.

Currently, you need to have more than one object selected for this to work.

5   Choose Object > Intertwine > Make.

The scarf and dog are grouped together as an Intertwine object. If you look at the top of the Properties panel, you will see "Intertwine."
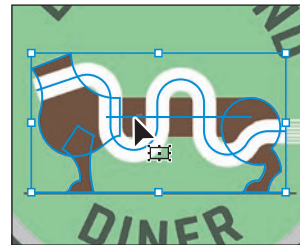
Now that the objects are an Intertwine object, you can tell Illustrator what parts of the white scarf, in this case, should go behind the dog body. To tell Illustrator which parts, you drag a selection around it.

6   Drag a selection around where the white scarf and dog body intersect. See the first part of the following figure. When you release, the scarf in that small area will be behind the dog!
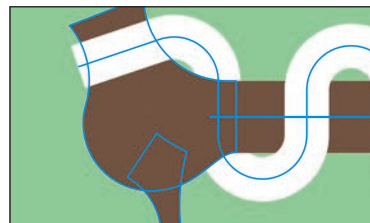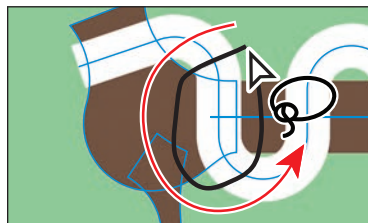
If it doesn't look right—maybe you didn't select enough of the overlapping area—you can choose Edit > Undo Rearrange and try again!

**7** Try dragging around another part of the white scarf where it overlaps the dog.
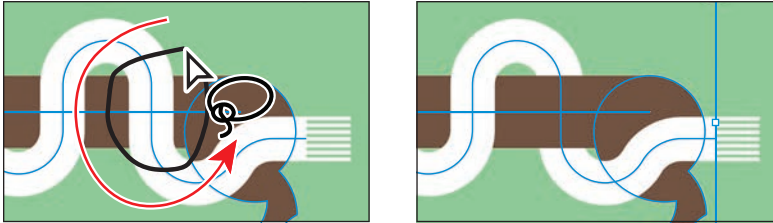
8 When finished, choose Select > Deselect.

9 With the Selection tool, click the white scarf to select the Intertwine object again.

If you wanted to continue telling Illustrator what parts of the scarf to bring in front, or reverse parts you already did, you could click Edit in the Quick Actions section of the Properties panel and make more selections.

Assembling the sign

To complete the sign, you'll drag and position the dog's head and the tail onto the sign, resize them, and reposition them. You'll need to zoom in and out a fair amount to move and resize things.

1 Choose View > Fit All In Window.

2 With the Selection tool (▶) selected, drag the dog's head you worked on onto the body of the dog in the middle artboard.

3 Drag the tail of the dog from the bottom of the leftmost artboard onto the sign as well.

4 Choose View > Zoom In a few times to zoom in to the dog.
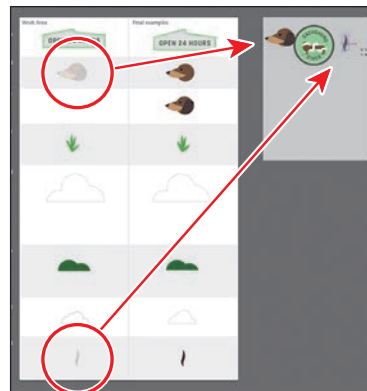
5 Resize the head by Shift-dragging a corner to make it smaller, and then drag it into place on the body of the dog.
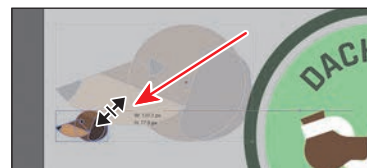
6 Select the tail.

Since the tail is a path with a stroke, to resize it and scale the stroke weight as well, you need to turn on Scale Strokes & Effects.

7 Click More Options (•••) in the Transform section of the Properties panel. Select Scale Strokes & Effects. Press the Esc key to hide the panel.
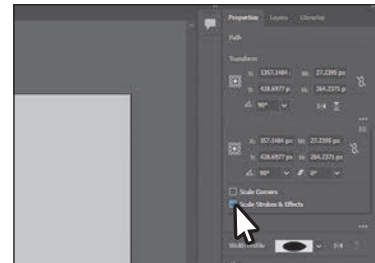
8 Shift-drag the tail to make it smaller.

9 To rotate the tail, move the pointer just off a corner and rotate to make it look like you see in the following figure.

10 Drag each into the position like you see in the figure.

**11** Drag across all of the pieces in the "DACHSHUND DINER" sign and choose Object > Group.

Assembling the poster

To finish up, you will now drag what you have made in the other artboards onto the poster in the far-right artboard.

1 Choose View > Fit All In Window.

2 Drag all of the pieces—the sign from the middle artboard, the clouds, the bush, and the plant—into the poster on the far right.

I put dashed line shapes in the poster where they might go!
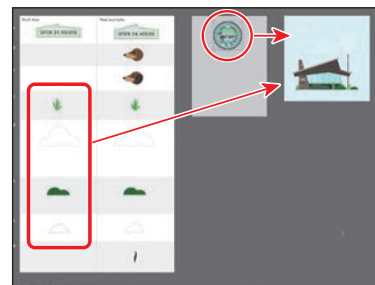
3 Resize the "OPEN 24 HOURS" sign to make it smaller and fit nicely. Make sure you drag with the Shift key to maintain the proportions!

4 Switch the toolbar back to the basic toolbar by choosing Window > Toolbars > Basic.

5 Choose File > Save, and then choose File > Close.

Review questions

1 Name two ways you can combine several shapes into one.

2 What is the difference between the Scissors tool (✂) and the Knife tool (✎)?

3 How can you erase with the Eraser tool (◆) in a straight line?

4 What is the main difference between shape modes and Pathfinder effects in the Properties panel or Pathfinder panel?

5 Why would you outline strokes?

Review answers

1 Using the Shape Builder tool (◉), you can visually and intuitively merge, delete, fill, and edit overlapping shapes and paths directly in the artwork. You can also use the Pathfinder effects, which can be found in the Properties panel, the Effects menu (not mentioned in this lesson), or the Pathfinder panel, to create new shapes out of overlapping objects.

2 The Scissors tool (✂) is meant to split a path, graphics frame, or empty text frame at an anchor point or along a segment. The Knife tool (✎) cuts objects along a path you draw with the tool, dividing objects. When you cut a shape with the Scissors tool, it becomes an open path. When you cut a shape with the Knife tool, the resulting shapes become closed paths.

3 To erase in a straight line with the Eraser tool (◆), press and hold the Shift key before you begin dragging with the Eraser tool.

4 In the Properties panel, when a shape mode (such as Unite) is applied, the original objects selected are permanently transformed, but you can hold down the Option (macOS) or Alt (Windows) key to preserve the original underlying objects. When a Pathfinder effect (such as Merge) is applied, the original objects selected are permanently transformed.

5 A path, like a line, can show a stroke color but not a fill color by default. If you create a line in Illustrator and want to apply both a stroke and a fill, you can outline the stroke, which converts the line into a closed shape (or compound path).